

and was meditating a trip to Cedar Keys, on the Gulf of Mexico, which is easily accessible by the lately constructed railroad from Fernandina. There I hoped to have found fresh varieties of birds, or at least that some of those already seen would prove to be more plentiful. But the news of the capture of Fort Sumter delayed my departure; and when, three days later, I heard of the secession of Virginia, the burning of the navy-yard at Norfolk, and the capture of the armoury at Harper's Ferry, with the probable interruption of the mails and means of communication, I thought it advisable to move northwards while I could. Accordingly I closed my ornithological campaign in Florida, and returned to Baltimore the same way that I came.

In three months I could do great things in Florida, both in birds and eggs. Five weeks is too short a time, especially when one goes as a stranger and has to learn all the localities. My experience teaches me (and Florida affords no exception) that it is necessary to go to a place once to know how to go to it a second time; for the reports and information of others are but of secondary utility, as no two persons' experience is alike. I should like to be in Florida from December until the middle of May, before which one should not leave. The climate is then delicious and perfectly healthy, and during that time there is nothing to be done in the northern States.

XXIV.—*Further note on the Eggs of Vultur auricularis and Aquila audax.* By J. H. GURNEY.

THE second volume of 'The Ibis' contains, in page 171, a notice of the eggs laid in the years 1859 and 1860 by a Vulture in my collection, of the great South African species, *Vultur auricularis* of Daudin. This bird has since laid two more eggs, being in all four eggs in four successive years, and at the following dates:—15th of February, 1859; 23rd of February, 1860; 20th of February, 1861; and 26th of February, 1862.

The character and colouring of all these eggs are similar, the ground being white, and the markings rufous, varying in extent and in intensity, but chiefly aggregated at the obtuse end of the egg.

Of the four eggs, the most rufous is that laid in 1860 ; there is less rufous colouring in the egg laid in 1861 ; still less in the first egg, laid in 1859 ; and least of all in the last egg, laid during the present year, which is, in fact, nearly white all over.

In the notice in the second volume of 'The Ibis' above referred to, I also mentioned an egg laid on the 28th of February, 1860, by a Wedge-tailed Eagle (*Aquila audax*, Latham).

This Eagle, which is still in my possession, did not lay in 1861, but produced a second egg on the 14th of March of the present year, resembling her first egg (laid in 1860), with the exception of being much less spotted with rufous, of which colour the second egg shows hardly any trace.

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XXV.—*Observations sur le Genre Circaëtus ; et Description d'une nouvelle Espèce.* Par MM. J. VERREAUX et O. DES MURS.

(Pl. VII.)

Nous profitons de la bonne hospitalité que veut bien nous continuer le savant Directeur de ce Recueil, pour y présenter une faible partie de nos travaux sur les Oiseaux de Proie.

On fait maintenant, car on a semblé l'ignorer pendant longtemps, et l'on apprend tous les jours, quelles difficultés présente l'étude de ces oiseaux, qui sont, de toute la série, ceux chez lesquels le métachromatisme met le plus de temps à se produire et à se parfaire. Il n'y a donc rien d'étonnant à ce que leur synonymie, comme leur spécification, aurait longtemps été remplie d'erreurs.

Nous avons, un moment, eu l'intention de faire une étude sur toutes les espèces du genre *Circaëtus*. Mais après l'excellent article si complet publié à leur sujet par M. von Heuglin, on peut dire que la lumière est faite : aussi n'y ajouterons-nous que fort peu de chose.

Nous nous y déterminons avec d'autant plus de confiance, que nous nous appuyerons par fois sur les observations si exactes d'un des plus compétents collaborateurs de l'*Ibis*, et le plus riche des collecteurs d'oiseaux de proie, l'honorable M. H. Gurney.

1. *CIRCAËTUS GALLICUS*, Gm.

Cette espèce, d'Europe, est aussi du Nord de l'Afrique, et